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765 177

After the Basor begins the others may start and all set out to enjoy themselves. Liquor is sometimes freely consumed on such occasions.

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Another feast, a family one called *barkhi* (H. *Barsi*), is given after a year, and after this the chief mourner can eat as he likes; it also marks his entry into the society once again. During the year of mourning it is sometimes his custom to eat normal foods at home, but never to go to a feast elsewhere.

765

MISCELLANEOUS DEATH CUSTOMS. After the return from the graveyard there is no formal visiting of the spot unless it be for the purpose of putting food upon the grave. After three or four days someone from the household may pay the graveyard an informal visit to see if everything is all right and that the grave has not been disturbed by animals. No flowers are put on the grave at any time, and the bones are never dug up and buried again at some other place. Kols also say that they never throw bodies into the streams, although we were informed by one of them that it is sometimes done. At Satna in Rewa State it was related that some times a male corpse may be taken to a river, where the head is shaven by the Hindu *nai* whom they pay two to four annas. As the body is about to be cast into the river the mourners announce that they are ready to give the river a gift, naming a certain sum of money, which they will pay to the Brahmin presiding over that part of the river. The usual amount is Rs. 1-4. This is called *gaunda*—alms. As the body floats away they shout "Go and get salvation" and also the words, "we've been so long together, but from now on we are separated, you from us and we from you, and we shall now have nothing more to do with each other." After this they return to the house and bathe and prepare things as previously related.

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There are adjustments necessary within the family after the death of the father or the mother. If the wife has died, all her clothes must be given away to the Domar or Basor. A second wife should never wear the clothes of a deceased woman. However, she may wear the metallic jewellery and ornaments of the first wife, and they are usually given to her.

If the father should die his clothes should also be given away. The widow has to break her glass bangles and this is usually done at the place and the time of the funeral. They may be broken by a member of the family, or a Hindu *nai* may be called. The widow is not required to put away her metallic ornaments.

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There is no trace of *sati* or widow burning among the Kols. We found none who had ever heard of a Kolin doing it. One man said: "We

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walk from one end to the other. In the evening the big meal is enjoyed by all alike.

Khichri or *Khichhrihai* is a simple festival, apparently one of fellowship when one should invite some friend to a meal and eat rice and *dal* which was boiled together. It comes several times a year.[1]

Marpak is a festival in memory of the dead. It has its Hindu influences and only the male members of the family go to a river where there is a Hindu *nai* and priest. The *nai* shaves their heads and beards and they go to the *ghat* to bathe. After this they visit the Brahmin who is sitting by the edge of the water. A few annas are given to him and holding up some water cupped in his hands, he mutters the name of the dead and recites some sacred texts. For the next few days whenever taking a bath or washing clothes, the Kol should do likewise and offer water in the name of his deceased. A leaf plate is put out either on the roof of the house or in a niche in the wall in front of the veranda. See plate xx. In this foods such as *puris, bhat, dal* and *bara* are put.

Nagpanchami. This is the worship of the serpent as symbolized particularly by the Cobra or *Nag*. This festival occurs on the fifth day of *Sawan* (July-August). Its institution is aptly described by Underhill :[2]

"This day celebrates the return of Krishna from the Yamuna after having overcome the big river snake Kaliya. Krishna had fallen into the river from a tree overhanging the bank, into which he had climbed to fetch a ball which had lodged there while he was playing with the herds people. His return with the snake was received with joy, the herdsmen offering Kaliya milk in gratitude for his not having harmed their favourite, Krishna.....

Another legend says that a man, ignorant of the festival, while ploughing on this day killed a nest of young snakes. The mother snake, in revenge, in the night bit the man and all his family, except one married daughter living in another village. Having killed all but this daughter, the mother snake set out for that village to kill her also. But the girl, knowing of the festival, had put out a dish of appetising food, which the snake tasted, and which gratified her so much that she not only refrained from killing the girl, but gave her a healing lotion to sprinkle on the bodies of the parents and other children, whereby they were all restored to life. After this, the festival became general."

1. Elwin also finds this festival among the Baigas and thinks they took it from the Gonds. He calls it a children's festival. The children beg rice and cook it by the riverside. *The Baigas*, p. 62.
2. Underhill, M. M., *The Hindu Religious Year*, p. 123.

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PLATE XX.

341
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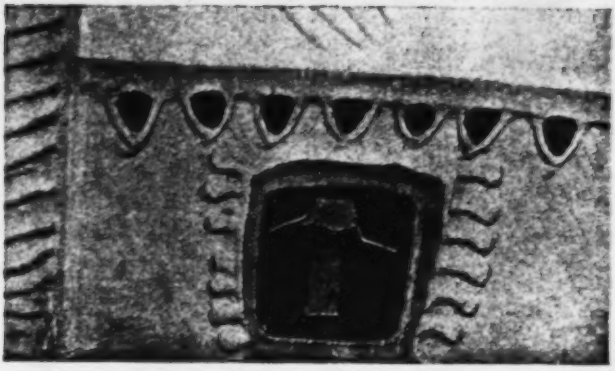

Leaf Cup set in decorated niche in outer Wall.

342
532

Peacock Design beside the Threshold of a Kol Dwelling.

[Facing p. 244]